

Message Text

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51

ORIGIN EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03

H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 /059 R

DRAFTED BY EA/K:JDFORBES:CHG

APPROVED BY EA - MR ZURHELLEN

EA/P - MR SMITH

SCA/SCS - JALIVORNESE (SUBS)

----- 092062

P 291149Z APR 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE STATE 099201

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CVIS, KS, US

SUBJECT: FATHER SINNOTT CASE - PRESS GUIDANCE

REF: SEOUL 2947

1. FOLLOWING PRESS GUIDANCE WAS PREPARED FOR DEPARTMENT
SPOKESMAN FOR APRIL 28 NOON PRESS BRIEFING. QUOTE:

QUESTION: CAN YOU CONFIRM REPORTS THAT THE KOREAN GOVERN-
MENT HAS ASKED AN AMERICAN MISSIONARY TO LEAVE?

ANSWER: WE UNDERSTAND THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED
NOT TO RENEW THE RESIDENCE PERMIT FOR THE REVEREND JAMES
SINNOTT, AN AMERICAN MARYKNOLL MISSIONARY.

QUESTION: DO YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION ON WHEN HE WILL
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LEAVE?

ANSWER: WE UNDERSTAND THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT HAS TOLD
PERMIT EXPIRES. WE DO NOT PRESENTLY KNOW HIS DEPARTURE

PLANS.

QUESTION: WHAT HAS OUR EMBASSY DONE ABOUT THIS?

ANSWER: AT FATHER SINNOTT'S REQUEST, THE EMBASSY DISCUSSED HIS CASE WITH THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT, AND PROVIDED CONSULAR SERVICES, INCLUDING THE PRESENCE OF A CONSULAR OFFICER ON APRIL 25 WHEN KOREAN IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES INFORMED HIM HIS RESIDENCE PERMIT WOULD NOT BE EXTENDED. HOWEVER, OUR LATEST INFORMATION IS THAT HIS DEPARTURE ORDER STILL STANDS.

QUESTION: IS THE STATE DEPARTMENT PROTESTING THE KOREAN DECISION?

ANSWER: NO. WE REGRET THAT A BASIS COULD NOT BE FOUND TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEMS INVOLVING THE CONTINUED RESIDENCE OF FATHER SINNOTT IN KOREA.

BACKGROUND: THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED NOT TO RENEW THE RESIDENCE PERMIT FOR FATHER SINNOTT, WHO HAS ENGAGED IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES WHICH THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT OBJECTS TO. AT FATHER SINNOTT'S REQUEST, THE EMBASSY APPROACHED THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT ON HIS BEHALF TO SEEK AN EXTENSION OF HIS RESIDENCE PERMIT. HOWEVER, THE KOREAN GOVERNMENT ASKED SINNOTT TO PLEDGE IN WRITING THAT HE WOULD OBEY KOREAN LAWS, A REQUEST TO WHICH SINNOTT WAS UNABLE TO AGREE. FATHER SINNOTT HAS STATED IN A PRESS INTERVIEW THAT HE WOULD NOT LEAVE VOLUNTARILY. UNQUOTE.

2. THERE WERE NO QUESTIONS CONCERNING SINNOTT CASE AT BRIEFING.

3. EMBASSY SHOULD NOT ISSUE STATEMENT PROPOSED REFTEL. IF QUERIED, EMBASSY SHOULD DRAW ON DEPARTMENT GUIDANCE GIVEN ABOVE. IF ASKED ABOUT EMBASSY ROLE, YOU SHOULD LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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LIMIT COMMENT TO BRIEF FACTUAL DESCRIPTION, NOTING EMBASSY ACTIONS WERE TAKEN AT REQUEST OF FATHER SINNOTT AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH EMBASSY'S CONSULAR RESPONSIBILITIES.

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